

REMARKS

The Office Action mailed 13 July 2004, has been received and reviewed. Claims 1, 2 4-1, and 14-20 are currently pending in the application. Claims 1, 2, 5-12, 15-20 and 22-24 stand rejected. Claims 3, 4, 13 and 14 are objected to. Applicants propose to amend claims 1, 3, 4, 11, 13 and 14, and respectfully request reconsideration of the application as proposed to be amended herein.

Claim Objections

Claims 1 and 11 are objected to in view of an informality. Responsive to the suggestion of the Examiner, applicants have amended the aforesaid claims to remove the basis of the objection. In view of these amendments, applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of the objection.

35 U.S.C. § 103(a) Obviousness Rejections

Obviousness Rejection Based on U.S. Patent No. 5,539,452 to Bush et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,802,281 to Clapp et al.

Claims 1-2, 5-12, 15-20 and 22-24 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bush et al.(U.S. Patent No. 5,539,452) in view of Clapp et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,802,281) and Shin et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,974,464). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection, as hereinafter set forth. Claims 22-24 have been cancelled rendering their rejection moot.

In paragraph 6 of his Action, the Examiner indicated that claims 3-4 and 13-14 would be allowable provided that they were rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of their respective base claim and any intervening claims. Responsive to the indication of the Examiner, applicants have amended Claim 1 to include all of the limitations of claim 3. Since claim 3 depended directly from claim 1, it follows that claim 1, as presently amended, is in essence, claim 3 rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of its base claim. In view of this amendment, applicants respectfully submit that claim 1, as amended, should now be in condition for allowance.

Claim 4 has been amended to depend directly from claim 1. In view of the allowability of claim 1, as amended, and further in view of the additional limitations set forth in claim 4, applicants respectfully submit that claim 4, as amended, should now be in condition for allowance.

Claim 11 has been amended to include all of the limitations of claim 13. Since claim 13 depended directly from Claim 11, it follows that claim 11, as amended, is in essence, claim 13 rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of its base claim, namely claim 11. In view of this amendment, claim 11 should now be in condition for allowance.

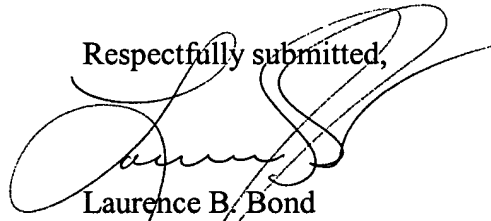
Claim 14 has been amended to depend directly from claim 11. In view of the allowability of claim 11, as amended, and further in view of the additional limitations set forth in claim 14, applicants respectfully submit that claim 14, as amended, should now be in condition for allowance.

Since the remaining claims of the application depend either directly or indirectly from either claim 1 or claim 11, applicants respectfully submit that each of the remaining claims of the application should also be allowable in view of their dependency from an allowable claim and furthermore in view of the respective recitation of additional limitations in each claim.

CONCLUSION

Claims 1-2, 4-12 and 14-20 are believed to be in condition for allowance, and an early notice thereof is respectfully solicited. Should the Examiner determine that additional issues remain which might be resolved by a telephone conference, he is respectfully invited to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Laurence B. Bond', written over the typed name and registration information.

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